

THE
DEFENDERS

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THE DEFENDERS™

HE HAS FISTS
OF HAMMERING
STEEL-- A HEART
TORN BY HATE--

--AND AN
ENTIRE CITY
MAY DIE
FOR HIS
CAUSE!!

WHAT SECRET LURKS
BEHIND THE
MASK OF THE
ASSASSIN?



The mysterious **DR. STRANGE!** The vibrant **VALKYRIE!** The high-flying **NIGHTHAWK!** The incredible **HULK!** Evil-doers **TREMBLE** at the names—for these four form the crux of the greatest **NON-TEAM** in history, heroes called together only when the need arises—to battle **MENACES** that threaten the security—or the very **LIFE**—of the planet **EARTH!**

Stan Lee
PRESENTS: **THE DYNAMIC DEFENDERS!**

STEVE GERBER **SAL BUSCEMA & KLAUS JANSON** **ARCHIE GOODWIN**
Writer Artists Editor

LOVE, ANARCHY AND, OH YES... THE ASSASSIN!

"DAMAGES PAID... CHARGES DIS- GO."
THE WORDS ISSUE FORTH FROM THE
STERN-FACED JUDGE, ALONG WITH CERTAIN
ANIMADVERSIONS ("NEVER AGAIN! WRECK
A RESTAURANT IN A BATTLE WITH A
MONSTER!"), AND VALKYRIE IS A FREE
WOMAN AGAIN.

THE COURTROOM WALLS SEEM
TO BOW OUTWARD TO MAKE
ROOM FOR THE SMILES--
VAL'S OWN, ATTORNEY **MATT
MURDOCK'S**, AND THOSE OF
NIGHTHAWK, THE **RED
GUARDIAN**, AND **POWER MAN**,
VAL'S FELLOW DEFENDERS.

INDEED, THE SUDDEN INFUSION
OF SUNLIGHT, LOLLIPOPS, AND
ROSES IS MARRED ONLY BY THE
SULLEN FROWN OF **JACK MORRIS**,
VAL'S HUSBAND OF SORTS.

JOE ROSEN, letterer
K. JANSON, colorist

AND
HE
DOESN'T
COUNT.

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YOU'RE FREE TO GO, MS. VALKYRIE-- WITH THE COURT'S **COMMENDATION** FOR YOUR ROLE IN QUELLING LAST WEEK'S **PRISON RIOT**.*

PICK UP YOUR BELONGINGS FROM THE **BAILIFF** ON YOUR WAY OUT.

THANK
HONOR.

*AS SEEN LAST IGN. **ARCHIE.

HOW **GOOD** IT IS TO FEEL **DRAGON-FANG'S** WEIGHT IN MY HANDS
ONCE MORE.

BUT MY **CLOTHING**--
WHERE--?

WE DON'T GOT
STORAGE SPACE
FOR **RAGS** AN'
EMPTY **SHELL**
CASINGS, LADY.
SORRY.

OUTSIDE...

BIG TOP
TAXI

HECK, HE'S
EVEN PAYING
MY TAXI FARE
HOME!

DON'T THANK ME,
CAGE. IT'S NOT AS
IF IT WERE FOR
FREE.

KYLE RICHMOND
MADE A
SUBSTANTIAL
DONATION TO MY
FAVORITE
CHARITY IN
EXCHANGE FOR
MY SERVICES.

JUST AS YOU MADE
RESTITUTION FOR
THE **DAMAGE**
VALKYRIE CAUSED.

SOMETIMES,
KYLE, IT SEEMS
THE DEFENDERS
RUN ON YOUR
MONETARY
GENEROSITY.

THANKS,
TANIA.

HA! YOU GOT IT
ALL **BACKWARDS**,
COMRADE. THE
WHOLE WORLD
RUNS ON **GREED**.
SEE?

"AN INTRIGUING PHILOSOPHY,
MR. CAGE. THE RUSSIAN HEROINE
CONCEDES," BUT IT ONLY EXPLAINS
WHY SOME PEOPLE **ACCEPT** THE
MONEY-- NOT WHY KYLE SO FREELY
DISBOURSES IT."

CAGE
SHUTS
UP...

...ALL THE WAY TO DR. STRANGE'S
GREENWICH VILLAGE **SANCTUM**...

...WHERE **CLEA**, THE
MAGE'S DISCIPLE, AND
WONG, HIS MAN-SERVANT,
GREET THEM ANXIOUSLY.

ALL WENT
WELL--?



BEHOLD THEIR
FACES CLEA. THE
ANSWER SHINES
FROM THEIR EYES.

IN THAT CASE, MAY
I PRESENT YOU,
VALKYRIE, WITH
A GIFT--

--SOMETHING
BY WHICH TO
REMEMBER
THIS DAY.

RIGHT ON,
WONG, MY MAN!

FOR
ME...?



BUT I'VE DONE
NOTHING TO
MERIT ANY
REWARD!

CONSIDER IT A
HANDSEL, VAL--

--SOMETHING
MAGIC TO
TAKE YOU
BACK INTO
THE
WORLD.



I DO NOT
KNOW IF
I CAN
ACCEPT--

PUT THE OL' WARRIOR'S PRIDE
ASIDE, PIGTAILS... JUST THIS
ONCE?

TAKE IT UPSTAIRS IF YOU'D
BE EMBARRASSED TO OPEN
IT WITH EVERYBODY WATCHING

YEAH WE
PROMISE
NOT TO
PEEK!



I SUPPOSE...
IF YOU
INSIST--

WE INSIST!
WE'LL BE
WAITING
FOR YOU
IN THE
PARLOR.

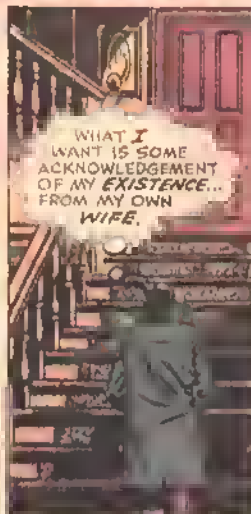
VERY
WELL!



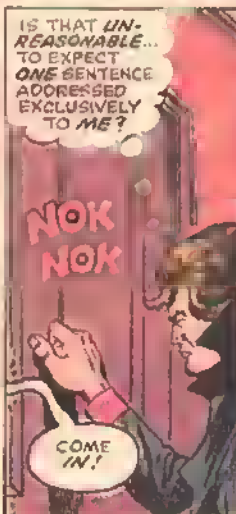
I SUPPOSE
I COULD
JOIN THE
OTHERS IN
THE PARLOR.

MIGHT AS
WELL BE
ALONE
WITH
PEOPLE AS
WITHOUT.

BUT
I DON'T
WANNA!
NYAAAN



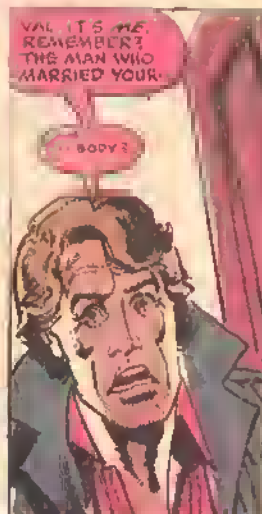
WHAT I
WANT IS SOME
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
OF MY EXISTENCE...
FROM MY OWN
WIFE.



IS THAT UN-
REASONABLE...
TO EXPECT
ONE SENTENCE
ADDRESSED
EXCLUSIVELY
TO ME?

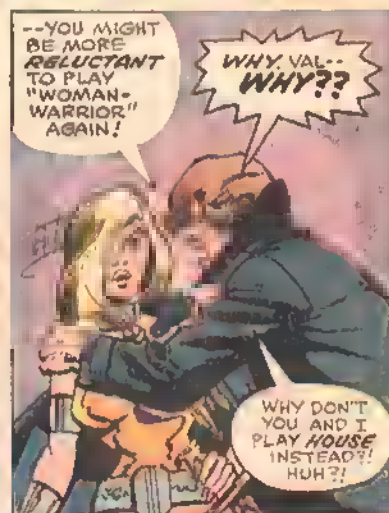
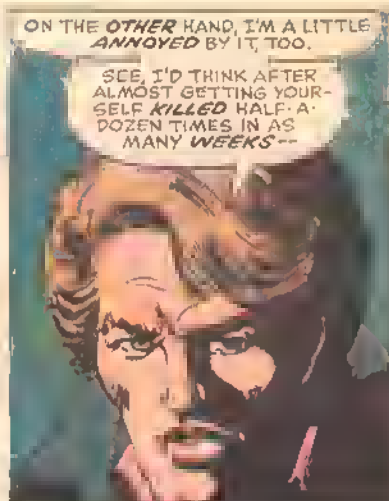
NOK
NOK

COME
IN!



VAL IT'S ME.
REMEMBER?
THE MAN WHO
MARRIED YOUR--

BODY?



ELSEWHERE: BROW CREASED, EYES CLOSED TO THIS PLANE OF REALITY, DR. STRANGE LOOKS INWARD.



HE IS MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS, SORCERER SUPREME OF THIS COSMOS... BUT OF LATE HIS SPELLS HAVE FUNCTIONED ONLY SPORADICALLY.



THE FAULT, HE REASONS, CAN ONLY BE IN HIMSELF. HE SEEKS NOW TO FIND IT...



... BEFORE DISASTER STRIKES!

HEY-- MISTER! LOOK OUT!!

EYES SNAP OPEN-- MIND INSTANTLY REORIENTS ITSELF-- LIPS FORM ESOTERIC COMMANDS-- FINGER'S GESTURE SUBTLY--



HEY-- MISTER-- DUCK!!

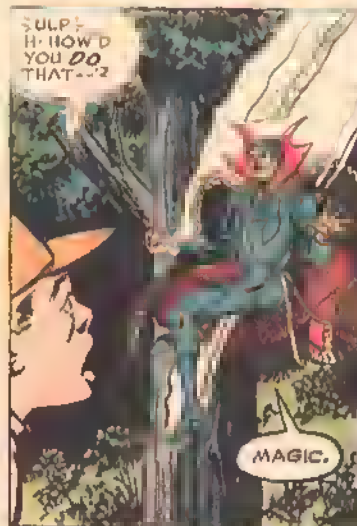
-- AND THE LAWS OF NATURE BEND TO HIS WILL.



HOLY COW--!

MY APPRECIATION FOR YOUR WARNING, YOUNG MAN.

SULP! H-HOW DO YOU DO THAT--?



MAGIC.

AW, C'MON-- THERE'S NO RICH THING! YOU'RE PULLIN' MY LEG!



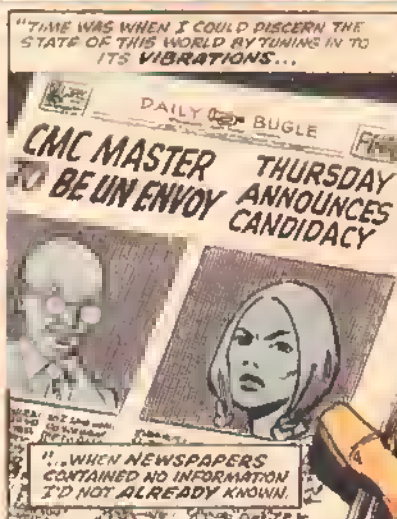
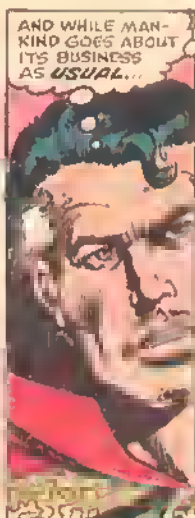
FROM 'WAY OVER HERE? WELL, THEN, IT MUST BE MAGIC!

DON'T FORGET YOUR BALL, SON.

ONE NEED ONLY PONDER THE UNDIGNIFIED ASPECT OF A SORCERER SUPREME WITH A BROKEN NOSE...



... TO GRASP THE URGENCY OF MY SEARCH INTO SELF.



"NOW I FEEL AS **LOST**, AS ADRIPT
IN AN INCOMPREHENSIBLE WORLD,
AS THE **LEAST** ENLIGHTENED OF
MY COMRADES -- THE INCREDIBLE
HULK!"

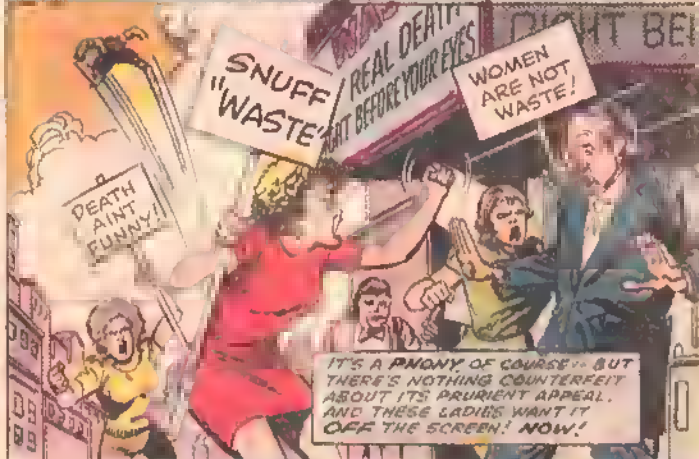
AND SPEAKING
OF OUR JUMPIN'
JADE GIANT,
SOMEWHERE OVER
THE SOUTHWESTERN
U.S. --



-- HIS INTENSE PREOCCUPATION
WITH HIS OWN PROBLEMS --
IS SUDDENLY DISTURBED BY
AN ODD SIGHT BELOW.

*SEE THE CURRENT ISH OF HULK'S
OWN AID. -- A.D.

THE COMMIOTION CENTERS ABOUT A FILM CALLED "**WASTE**" WHICH
PURPORTS TO PORTRAY THE **ACTUAL DEATH** OF A PRETTY BLONDE
ACTRESS.



IT'S A PRONGY OF COURSE -- BUT
THERE'S NOTHING COUNTERFEIT
ABOUT ITS PRURIENT APPEAL.
AND THESE LADIES WANT IT
OFF THE SCREEN! NOW!

AS FOR
GREENSKIN --
HE COULDN'T
CARE **LESS**
BUT THE
STRIDENT
VOICES TOUCH
SOME NERVE --
THE WAVING
SIGNS
FLUTTER
EYES LIKE
SEMAPHORES --

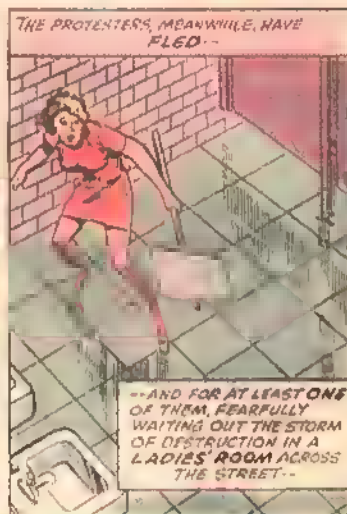
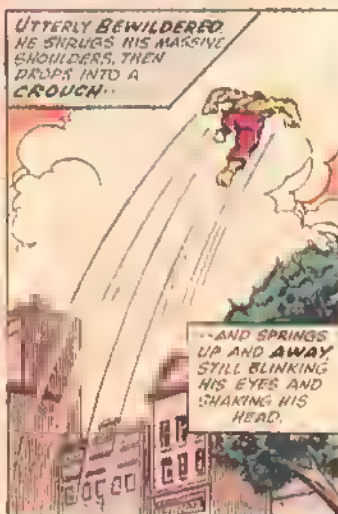
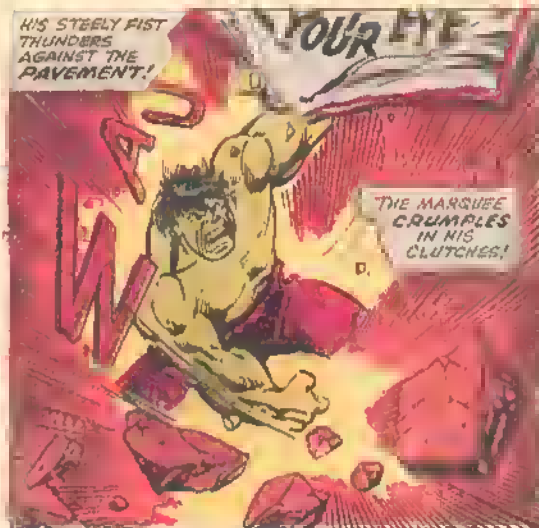


-- WHOSE MESSAGE INEXPLIC-
ABLY CATAPULTS HIM FROM
INDIFFERENCE TO **RAGE!**



WE DON'T
CARE IF IT'S
MAKING
MONEY! WE'LL
WASTE YOU
IF --





MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE SANCTUM...

HAVE YOU SEEN ENOUGH, KYLE, TANYA?

I MUST CONFESS A CERTAIN SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS AT DISPLAYING MYSELF IN THIS MANNER.

WHO'S LOOKING AT YOU? I WAS JUST OGLING CLEA'S MASTERFUL TAILORING.

OH...?

SUDDENLY:

KLASH

IT SEEMS TO BE... A ROCK... WRAPPED IN PLAIN BROWN PAPER. I DON'T...

I DO! IT'S SPECIAL DELIVERY... STREET PUNK STYLE!

IT'S TRUE! IT'S A MESSAGE! BUT WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

How can you call yourselves Americans while you harbor a COMMUNIST in your home?
--Committee for Free Emigration

IT MEANS SOMEBODY KNOWS THE RED GUARDIAN--TANYA-- IS RUSSIAN. BASICALLY.

AND THEY'RE PINNING THE INJUSTICES OF AN ENTIRE SOCIAL SYSTEM ON HER!

RIGHT ON BIRD-FACE! AN' I'M BETTIN' THEY'LL BE DITCHIN' BOMBS NEXT... 'LESS WE NIP THIS IN THE BUD!

MORE MASS INSANITY! LIKE NEBULON'S-- LIKE--

MOVE!

OUTSIDE...

THERE THEY GO! AROUND THAT CORNER!

WOULD YOU AND THE OTHERS TAKE UMBRAGE, NIGHTHAWK, WERE I TO PURSUE THEM ALONE?

NOOO-- BUT I'D FEAR FOR YOUR SANITY... AND YOUR SAFETY.

BE THAT AS IT MAY--

IT'S MY PRESENCE WHICH PRECIPITATED THIS ATTACK-- AND THUS MY RESPONSIBILITY TO FORESTALL ANY REPETITION.

OKAY... IF I CAN'T CHANGE YOUR MIND...

BUT WATCH YOURSELF, LADY!



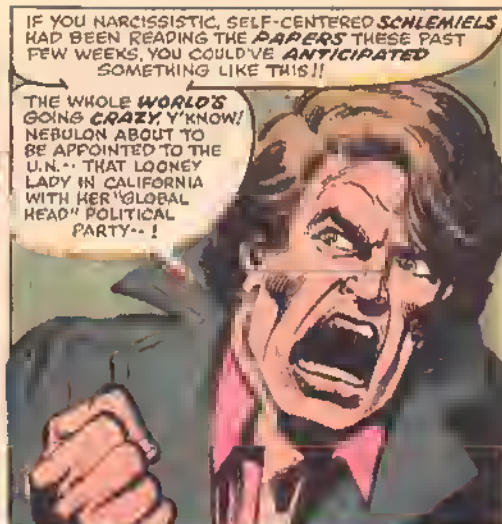
WHERE IS THE RED GUARDIAN, KYLE? YOU AND MR. CAGE LOOK SO GRIM--!

TANYA TOOK OFF SOLD AFTER THE BADDIES. SHE INSISTED-- AND I'M KICKING MYSELF FOR GIVING HER THE NOD.

BRIGHT BOY HERE FIGGERED TOO LATE THAT THE DUDES HAD PLENTY O' TIME T' SPLIT THE SCENE WHILE WE WERE READIN' THE NOTE.

HE'S THINKIN' MAYBE RG'S HEADIN' INTO A TRAP.

BRILLIANT, I'M IMPRESSED.



IF YOU NARCISSISTIC, SELF-CENTERED SCHLEMIELS HAD BEEN READING THE PAPERS THESE PAST FEW WEEKS, YOU COULD'VE ANTICIPATED SOMETHING LIKE THIS!!

THE WHOLE WORLD'S GOING CRAZY Y'KNOW! NEBULON ABOUT TO BE APPOINTED TO THE U.N.. THAT LOONEY LADY IN CALIFORNIA WITH HER 'GLOBAL HEAD' POLITICAL PARTY--!



BUT IF YOU TURKEYS CAN'T PUNCH A PROBLEM IN THE FACE-- OR LIFT IT OUT OF THE WAY--

--YOU'RE JUST NOT INTERESTED, ARE YOU??



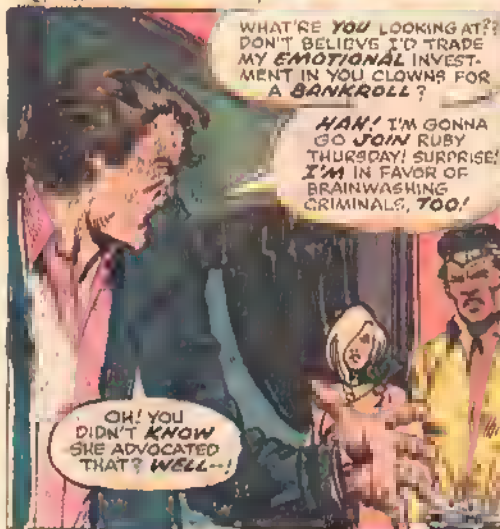
ALL RIGHT, PAL! THAT'S IT, THAT'S ALL! I'VE HAD IT WITH YOU!!

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE YOU LEARN? BETTER YET, WHAT WOULD IT TAKE TO MAKE YOU LEAVE?



YOU REALLY WANNA KNOW? ABOUT-- OH-- \$300,000!

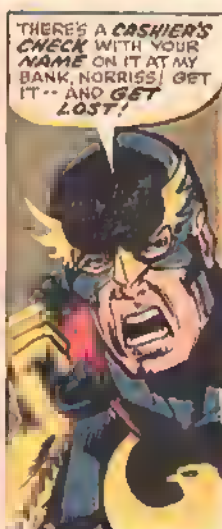
YOU GOT IT!!



WHAT'RE YOU LOOKING AT?? DON'T BELIEVE I'D TRADE MY EMOTIONAL INVESTMENT IN YOU CLOWNS FOR A BANKROLL?

HAN! I'M GONNA GO JOIN RUBY THURSDAY! SURPRISE! I'M IN FAVOR OF BRAINWASHING CRIMINALS, TOO!

OH! YOU DIDN'T KNOW SHE ADVOCATED THAT? WELL--!



THERE'S A CASHIER'S CHECK WITH YOUR NAME ON IT AT MY BANK, NORRISI! GET IT-- AND GET LOST!



WITH PLEASURE!!

JACK...?

MEANWHILE, RG CLOSES THE DISTANCE BETWEEN HERSELF AND HER QUARRY...

THAT RUSSKI BROAD MUST BE ON ROLLER SKATES!

SHE'S RIGHT ON OUR HEELS!

INDEED, BUT BEFORE WE MAY REASON WITH ONE ANOTHER--

--WE SHALL HAVE TO MEET EYE-TO-EYE.

THEN WE SHALL DISCUSS OUR DIFFERENCES AS INDIVIDUALS-- FOR THOUGH YOU *PRETEND* TO REPRESENT A WHOLE PEOPLE--

--THEY ARE NO MORE TO BLAME FOR YOUR STUPIDITY THAN I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR WRONGS COMMITTED BY THE SOVIET STATE!

CLASH!

ALL I SEE, LADY, IS RED!

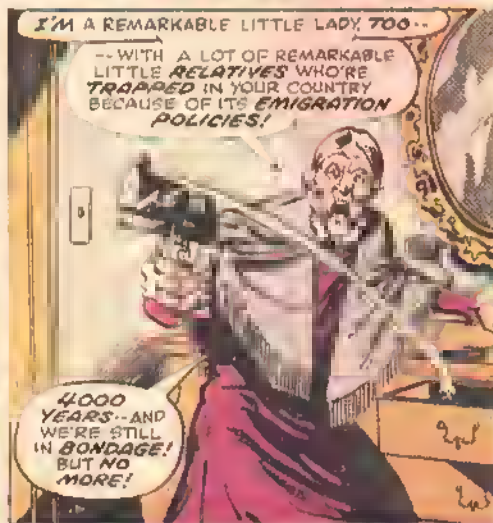
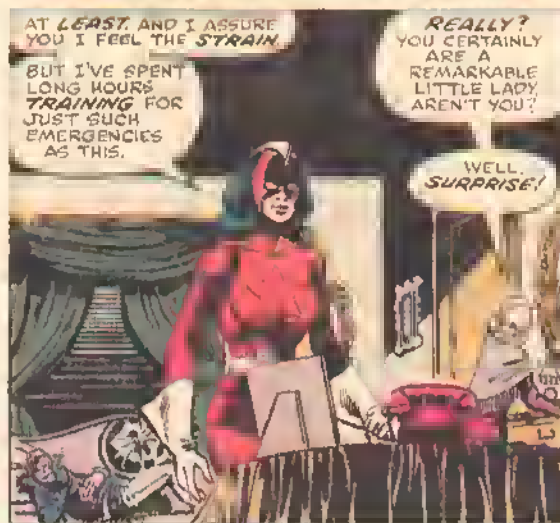
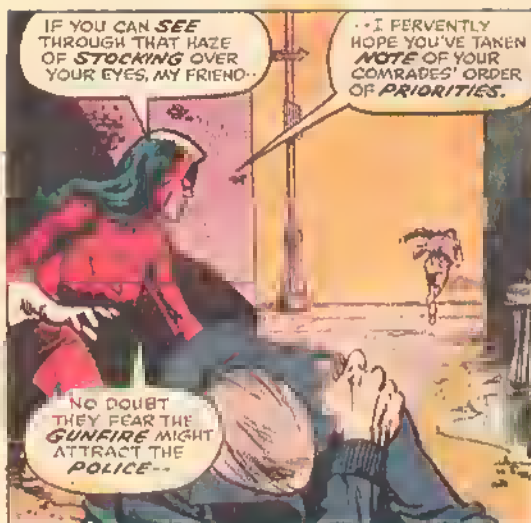
RED AS IN "SQUARE"--
RED AS IN "COMMUNIST"!

BLAM
CLAK
FLAK

AND WHAT IS THAT QUAINT MAXIM OF YOURS--
"BETTER DEAD THAN RED"?

AND NOW, *DISARMED*, PERHAPS YOU'LL--
OH, NO!

ONE OF THEIR NUMBER--
INJURED BY THE GUN BLAST!



WE'RE GOING TO FREE THEM, YOUNG WOMAN. AND YOU'RE GOING TO HELP!

I'LL TAKE OVER NOW, MRS. ROSENZWEIG.

YOU'RE GOING TO BE OUR CAPTIVE FOR A TIME...
DR. BELINSKY,

OH, YES-- WE KNOW YOUR REAL IDENTITY.

AND WE'RE EQUALLY AWARE OF YOUR TENUOUS STATUS IN THE SOVIET UNION.

WE INTEND TO EXPLOIT IT, DOCTOR-- TO THE HILT-- AS THE USSR HAS USED OUR PEOPLE.

YOU MUST BE MAD! HOW CAN YOU UTILIZE THE RED GUARDIAN'S POSITION AS AN ENEMY OF THE STATE?!

TO BLACKMAIL YOU, DOCTOR-- OBVIOUSLY.

FOR DR. BELINSKY'S STANDING AS A RENOWNED NEUROLOGIST IS FAR MORE VALUABLE TO US.

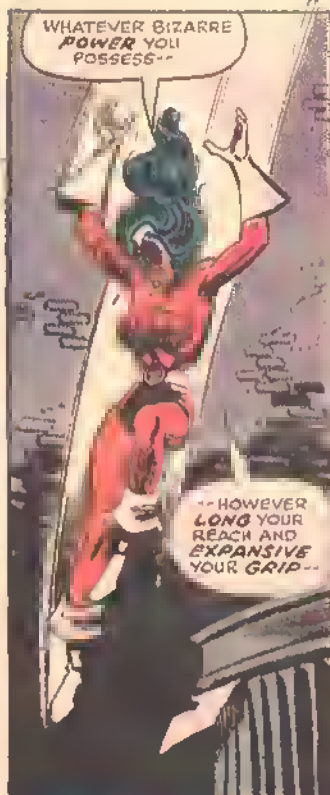
THE COMINTERN IS PROUD OF YOU, DOCTOR.

THEY'LL GO TO GREAT LENGTHS TO INSURE YOUR SAFETY.

AND I THINK YOU'LL AGREE-- WE PRESENT A VERY CREDIBLE THREAT.

I'M AFRAID YOU OVERESTIMATE MY IMPORTANCE HOODED ONE -

--AND SEVERELY UNDER-ESTIMATE MY SURVIVAL INSTINCT!



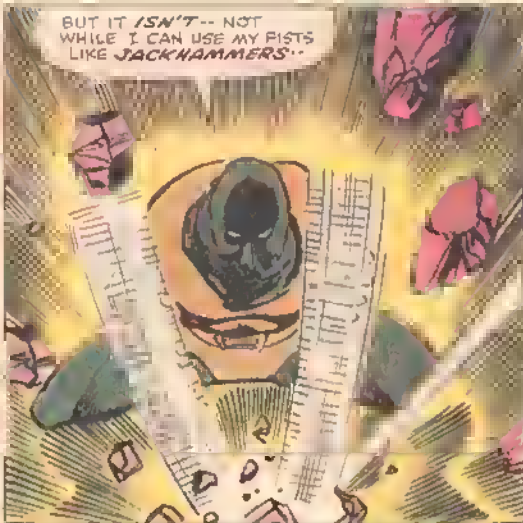
--AND UNDERTOOK
TO TEST MY HYPOTHESIS,
BASED UPON OBSERVATION,
THAT YOUR **STRENGTH**
WAS LOCALIZED ENTIRELY
IN YOUR **ARMS**.

SO LONG AS I CAN
EVADE YOUR **GRASP**,
THEN--

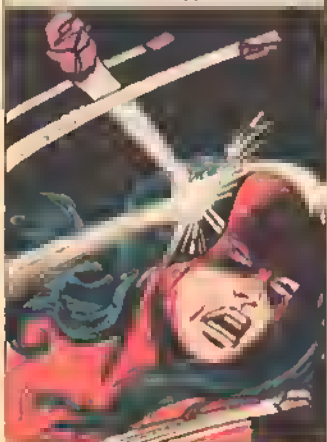
DON'T YOU *WISH*
IT WAS THAT
SIMPLE?!



BUT IT *ISN'T*-- NOT
WHILE I CAN USE MY PISTS
LIKE **JACKHAMMERS**--



--AND SHOWER YOU WITH
FLYING FRAGMENTS OF
SIDEWALK!



OF COURSE, A STUNT
LIKE THAT **DOES** TAKE ITS
TOLL ON MY TENDER
SYN THETIC SKIN--!



IT CAN BE **REPAIRED**, THOUGH--
ALMOST AS EASILY AS YOU PULL
ON YOUR **GAUNTLETS**.

BUT SINCE YOU
CAN'T MAKE THE
SAME CLAIM FOR
YOUR **NECK**--

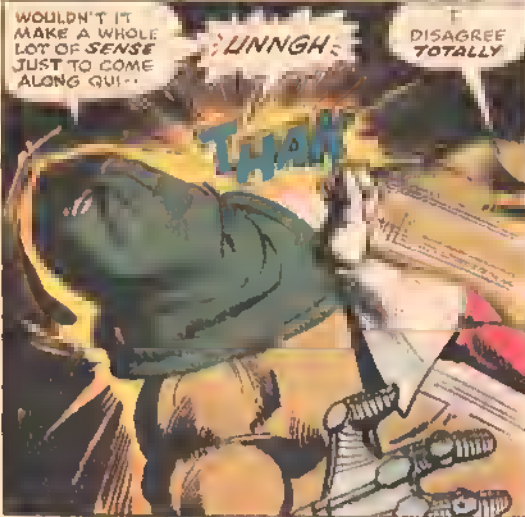


WOULDN'T IT
MAKE A WHOLE
LOT OF **SENSE**
JUST TO COME
ALONG QUI--

UNNGH

DISAGREE
TOTALLY

THAN



I'VE ALWAYS TRIED TO
EVALUATE MY CAPABILITIES
HONESTLY, AND AS I
ASSESS THE SITUATION:

I AM BRUISED, SHAKEN
A BIT, BUT HARDLY
DISABLED--OR
OVERAWED.



AND YOU'RE AS COLDLY **DISPASSIONATE** AS ANY OF YOUR ILK.

ALL RIGHT THEN--
LET'S HANDLE
IT YOUR WAY!



EXCELLENT!
CATCH ME IF
YOU CAN!



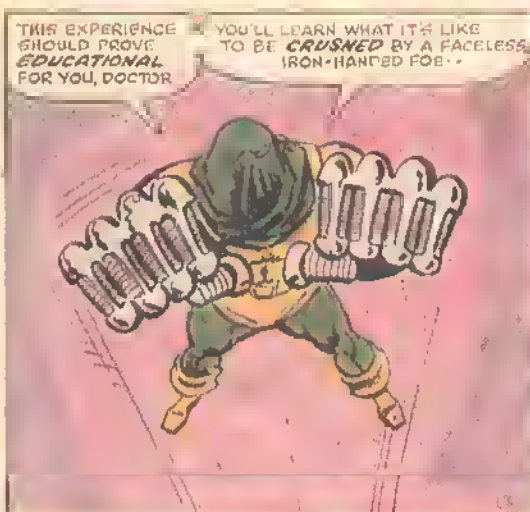
OH, I
CAN-- I
CAN-- IN
FACT--

--YOU COULDN'T'VE
MADE IT **EASIER**
IF YOU'D
PLANNED IT!



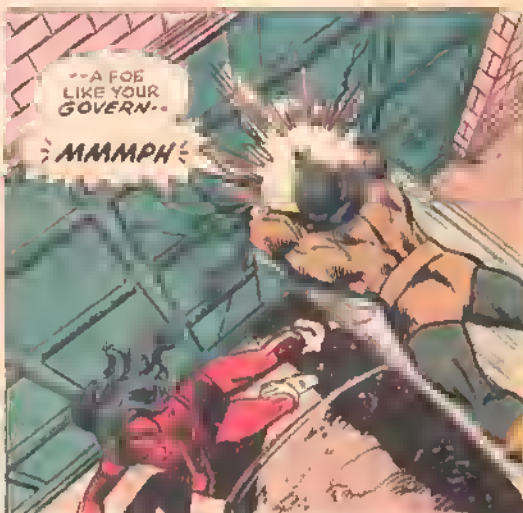
THIS EXPERIENCE
SHOULD PROVE
EDUCATIONAL
FOR YOU, DOCTOR

YOU'LL LEARN WHAT IT'S LIKE
TO BE **CRUSHED** BY A FACELESS
IRON-HANDED FOE--



--A FOE
LIKE YOUR
GOVERN--

MAMPH

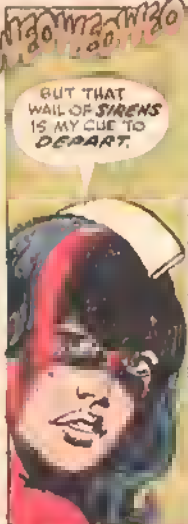


I AM BETTER ACQUAINTED
WITH **REPRESSION**,
WITH UNTHINKING
BRUTALITY, THAN
YOU MIGHT **IMAGINE**,
HOODED ONE.

AND WHETHER OR NOT I
AGREE WITH YOU--YOUR
TACTICS ARE ABHORRENT
TO ME... AND AN AFFRONT TO
THOSE YOU CLAIM TO
STAND FOR.



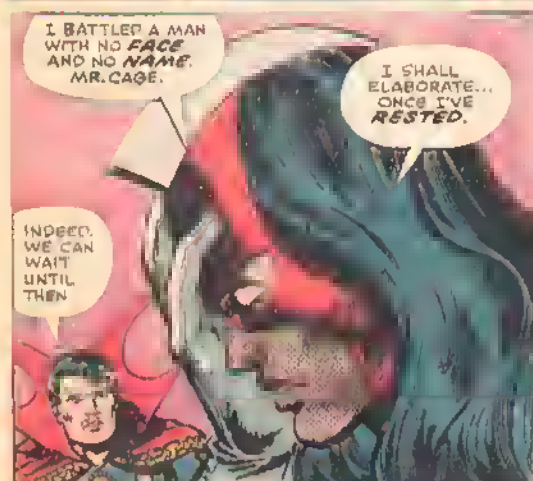
BUT THAT
WAIL OF **SIRENS**
IS MY CUE TO
DEPART.



I SHALL LEAVE
YOU TO DEAL
WITH YOUR **LOCAL**
AUTHORITIES.

I HAVE
BUSINESS
ELSEWHERE.
**DOSSÉ-
DANYA!**





AT LAST! THE MIND-MANGLING CONCLUSION OF THE NEBULON/HEADMEN EPIC! DON'T MISS OUR **DEFENDERS ANNUAL**..

A WORLD GONE SANE? (ON SALE THIS MONTH!!)